



# DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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### TUNA TO BE TAGGED

Tagging tuna to determine the migratory habits of this fish marks another in the steps science is taking to chart the life-histories of deep-sea species.

Begun already in the waters off Freeport, Long Island (N.Y.), the work continues a study of marine fishery resources now being conducted by Nassau County in cooperation with the Fish and Wildlife Service, United States Department of the Interior.

Small sized tuna, ranging up to about 50 pounds, are marked with a tag consisting of two celluloid disks; one red, bearing instructions to return the tag when the fish is recaptured to the (former) Bureau of Fisheries, Washington, D. C.; the other, white, bears a number. The number on this disk identifies the fish as to the time and place it was released for comparison with information on the time and place at which the fish is recaptured. These disked tags are attached to the gill cover by a non-corrosive metal pin. Information on the date, locality, and kind of gear by which the tagged fish was caught, together with the tag itself, if sent to the Service headquarters in Washington, D. C., pays a reward of \$1.00 to the sender.

Preliminary work has demonstrated that this tagging method can be used also on small sized tuna which normally are simply lifted aboard by the wire leader.

However, since fish for tagging must not be injured in any way--as by gaffing, for instance--another method has been devised for tagging the larger sized tuna running up to two to three hundred pounds. For these a bright red strip of celluloid, bearing a tag number and mailing instructions, is attached to the shank of the fish hook by non-corrosive wire. The idea here would be that when such fish are lost because of the line breaking, it will carry with it a marked hook.

It is not known, of course, how long these hooks may remain in the fish before becoming detached and whether any significant results will be obtained from such a method of tagging. The idea originated, however, from the fact that large-sized tuna have been caught with several hooks still attached to their mouths, apparently without harm to the fish.

Voluntary cooperation of boatmen's associations and individual sportsmen have been offered in tagging rod and reel caught tuna. It is also planned to tag some of the "school tuna" that usually run into the pound nets during the month of August.

Requests for further information on tagging of tuna together with any offers to cooperate, should be directed to the Service's field office headquarters at 65 West Sunrise Highway, Freeport, New York.

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